

enabling relief to be detected that is smaller than or equal to 100 μm ;

utilizing said at least one non-optical sensor to acquire an image of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of skin; and

utilizing said image to determine at least one of a parameter of said zone and a diagnosis of said zone.--


REMARKS

Claims 1-67 are pending.

The present amendment amends the original claims for improved clarity. In addition, new claims 38-67 are submitted.

If the Examiner deems that a telephonic conference would be of assistance in placing this application in better form for allowance, he or she is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,


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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-5, 7-20 and 22-37 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of acquiring an image [of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin or of a zone of the hair in order to determine certain parameters of said zone and/or to perform a diagnosis, wherein the image acquired by means of acquisition apparatus] comprising:

providing at least one non-optical sensor for obtaining information concerning [the] microrelief of [said] a zone; and

utilizing said at least one non-optical sensor to acquire an image of one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of skin and a zone of hair.

2. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the [acquisition apparatus] non-optical sensor includes a sensor having an active surface that is sensitive to variations in temperature.

3. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the [acquisition apparatus] non-optical sensor includes a sensor having an active surface sensitive to an electrical property [at least one electrical magnitude, e.g. electrical charge, the electrical magnitude being preferably] measured by measuring one of capacitance [or] and conductance.

4. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the [acquisition apparatus] non-optical sensor includes a sensor having an active surface that is sensitive to variations in pressure.

5. (Amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein the active surface is defined by a plurality of individual detection cells disposed in at least one row[, and preferably in a plurality of juxtaposed rows].

7. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the acquisition apparatus is arranged to acquire an image of a zone that is large enough to be statistically representative, [preferably] including an area lying in [the] a range of from about 0.2 cm² to about 2 cm²l, and more preferably lying in the range about 0.25 cm² to about 1 cm²].

8. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the image is acquired [acquisition is performed] statically, without moving the non-optical sensor relative to the zone under study during image acquisition.

9. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the image is acquired [acquisition is performed] dynamically, with relative movement between the non-optical sensor and the zone under study during image acquisition.

10. (Amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein the non-optical sensor includes an active surface [is] in the form of a strip of individual detection cells.

11. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the image [acquisition] is [performed] acquired without the non-optical sensor coming into contact with the zone under study.

12. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the image [acquisition] is [performed] acquired with the non-optical sensor in contact with the zone under study.

13. (Amended) A method according to claim 12, [wherein the] including measuring pressure of contact between the non-optical sensor and the zone under study [is measured] during image acquisition.

14. (Amended) A method according to claim 12, wherein the image [acquisition] is

[performed] acquired at a substantially constant contact pressure.

15. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the acquired image is a [3D] three dimensional image of the zone under study.

16. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the acquired image is a [2D] two dimensional image of the zone under study.

17. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the non-optical sensor [presents] has a spatial resolution lying in [the] a range of from 10 μm to 100 μm [, preferably in the range about 25 μm to 75 μm , and more preferably close to about 50 μm].

18. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, further including processing the image [wherein the acquire image is processed] in order to determine characteristic parameters of the zone under study.

19. (Amended) A method according to claim 18, wherein the processing provides information concerning [the] a surface density of skin lines.

20. (Amended) A method according to claim 18, wherein the processing provides information concerning [the] an anisotropy coefficient of [the] skin line density.

22. (Amended) A method according to claim 18, [wherein the] further including utilizing a result of the processing [enables] to establish a diagnosis [to be established].

23. (Amended) A method according to claim 18, [wherein the] further including utilizing a result of the processing [enables] to recommend a care treatment [to be recommended].

24. (Amended) A method according to claim 18, wherein the processing is performed remotely by transmitting digital data over a network[, in particular the Internet].

25. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, further including storing at least one of a plurality of the images and data associated with a plurality of the images [wherein

images of the zone under study that succeed one another in time and/or data associated with said images are stored] on a recording medium, and wherein the plurality of images are taken at different times.

26. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, further including simultaneously displaying at least one of a plurality of the images and data associated with a plurality of the images [wherein images taken at different times and/or data associated with said images are displayed simultaneously], and wherein the plurality of images are taken at different times to enable [the] a person [whose skin and/or hair is under study] to [see the] evaluate effects of treatment or [to become aware of] the need for treatment.

27. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the zone under study [is] includes one of a region of the forearm [or] and a region of the face.

28. (Amended) An assembly comprising:

[-] image acquisition apparatus for acquiring an image of at least one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin [or] and a zone of the hair in order to determine certain parameters of said zone and/or perform a diagnosis, said acquisition apparatus including a portable non-optical sensor arranged to be [suitable for being] brought into contact with [a] at least one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin[, in particular a region of the forearm or of the face, or with] and a zone of the hair[, preferably having an active surface that is sensitive to temperature variations, to electrical charge, or to variations in pressure]; and

[-] a computer tool enabling [useful] information to be extracted from [the] signals delivered by the non-optical sensor concerning [the] microrelief of said zone, said information relating to [the] a state of one of the skin [or of] and the hair.

29. (Amended) A computer system for use with images acquired to determine at least one of certain parameters of a zone and a diagnosis of a zone, wherein the zone is at

least one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin and a zone of the hair, the computer system comprising [implementing the method according to claim 1, in particular an Internet server arranged to]:

a) [receive] means for receiving images in digital form corresponding to at least one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin and [or to] a zone of the hair;

b) means for [process] processing said images in order to determine data concerning [the] at least one of surface density of lines, [and/or the] surface density of pores, [and/or the] size of pores, and an [and/or the] anisotropy coefficient of [the] line density; and

c) means for [establish] establishing a diagnosis on the basis of the data resulting from the [image] means for processing[, optionally making use of comparison data; and

d) optionally, on the basis of said diagnosis, selecting a suitable care product from a predetermined range of products].

30. (Amended) A computer system according to claim 29, the system being arranged to send [e-mail or] a message to a person who has made a connection thereto and transmitted an image of the skin, and [e-mail or] message information informing the person about the result of the diagnosis [and optionally recommending a care product].

31. (Amended) A method [of] for recommending cosmetic treatment, the method comprising [the following steps]:

a) acquiring an image of at least one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin [or of] and a zone of the hair[, by means of] utilizing a non-optical sensor;

b) processing said image in a computer system so as to obtain a diagnosis; and

c) recommending care treatment in [the light of] response to said diagnosis.

32. (Amended) A method according to claim 31, wherein the image is processed at a site at which said image is acquired [on its acquisition site, e.g. in premises for selling or

demonstrating goods, or at home].

33. (Amended) A method according to claim 31, wherein the image is process at a processing location remote from a site at which said image is acquired [remotely, in a processing center].

34. (Amended) A method according to claim 33, wherein the image is sent to the processing [center] location over [a network, in particular] the Internet.

35. (Amended) A method according to claim 31, including the step [consisting in] of storing for comparison at least one of: (a) images that are acquired successively in [time] times and[/or] (b) data resulting from images acquired successively in time [therefrom in order to compare them and show up any improvement, for example].

36. (Amended) A method of acquiring an image [of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin and/or a zone of the hair in order to determine certain parameters of said zone and/or perform a diagnosis, wherein the image is acquired by means of acquisition apparatus] comprising:

providing at least one non-optical sensor, said non-optical sensor being a non-thermal sensor; and

utilizing said at least one non-optical sensor to acquire an image of one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of skin and a zone of hair;

utilizing said image to determine at least one of a parameter of said zone and a diagnosis of said zone.

37. (Amended) A method of acquiring an image [of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of the skin and/or a zone of the hair in order to determine certain parameters of said zone and/or perform a diagnosis, wherein the image is acquired by means of acquisition apparatus] comprising:

providing at least one non-optical sensor, said non-optical sensor [presenting] having resolution enabling relief to be detected that is smaller than or equal to 100 μm ;

utilizing said at least one non-optical sensor to acquire an image of one of a non-dermatoglyphic zone of skin and a zone of hair; and

utilizing said image to determine at least one of a parameter of said zone and a diagnosis of said zone.

Please add the following new claims:

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